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NEGLECTED ARABIA

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BASRAH GIRLS' SCHOOL, WITH THE LADIES OF THE BASRAH MISSION STAFF.

(Schoolgirls Who Need Your Prayers, p. 14.)

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NEGLECTED ARABIA

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THE ARABIAN MISSION

Reminiscences of Pioneer Work at Jidda

MISS JENNY DE MAYER.

IT may please the Lord to have me put down some time or other the story of the "Jidda venture": how it started far away at Samarkand with an act of simple obedience to the Lord's command that made me step out on what seemed a fool's errand, but which landed me ultimately in Arabia.

I cannot do this here—I can only give some disjointed facts and remarks about the work at Jidda, as they rise up in my memory. Let me state shortly, that in autumn and winter of 1912 I went over twice to Jidda, a Sister of Mercy on board a Russian transport ship of pilgrims from Turkistan, Persia, Afghanistan and Kashgar; that during three and one-half months I lived, moved, prayed and worked among 5,000 hadjeehs and caught the vision of work in Jidda and farther inland even, at the time of the Hadj. And as I was neither bound nor backed by any Board or Society I simply started out for Jidda in July, 1913, all by myself under God, to open Medical Mission work amongst the pilgrims from Central Asia, where my mission field primarily lay. On my way to Egypt I met Dr. S. M. Zwemer of Cairo, at Zurich, and when, on his question: "What are you going to do this summer?" I answered, "I'm going to Jidda to work amongst the pilgrims"—he offered me the use of a house there which he had rented half a year ago, for a colporteur, but which was now unoccupied. I accepted gladly and so from being since 1908 partners in faith, hope and love for the Mohammedan World—we became now partners in "Real Estate Business" too! I put together at Cairo a pharmacy which proved very workable and valuable to me and set out for Jidda—undisturbed by the fact that I knew only some 20 to 30 Arabic words, like "Mafish," "Kidda," Moush kidda," etc.—as I expected to work exclusively amongst my Central Asian people whose languages I understood. But the Lord had a greater vision for this venture, than I—and from the beginning of work in my dispensary—Arabs from

Jidda, Bedouins, men from Medina and Mecca came to seek my help. Very soon I was also called to the houses of the rich ladies of the town and received even invitations to go to Mecca, so that at the end of three months I had given medical help of some kind in more than 1,000 registered cases of sickness of all description—both in my dispensary at the "Bokharian quarter" and in my practice at the homes. Evidently the Lord wanted to teach me and other friends of the Beit-ul-Islam, that, as Miss Davidson, of Peshawar puts it, (*Moslem World*, January, 1920) "Jidda, like Afghanistan, is waiting, aye longing, tho' they know it not, for one with love and courage enough to turn the key of faith and enter in to the fast shut door, so that through the agency of human love and sympathy the light of the Gospel of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ may shine upon them too."

Here some experiences, good and bad, as my memory recalls them:

I was quietly preparing to open my dispensary unnoticed so far by the Turkish officials, but I had not yet been called into any home. One day my doorkeeper, a tall ebony black Sudanese, with his just as black little twin boys, Abdou Rahman and Abdou Rahim—following shyly at their father's heels—made me to understand more by signs than by words (it was soon after I had arrived), that he wanted me to visit a very sick woman. He led me to a big court yard, behind the Bazaar, where thousands of bags of flour, dates, sugar, etc., were piled up; then to a dilapidated house and up the steep stone steps, so characteristic of houses in Jidda and Mecca, to the top floor where the sick woman lay on a couch. It was a bare room, the owner was evidently a poor man. The woman was emaciated to a degree, with an immense abdomen. We could understand each other—she talking Osmanli, I—Sart, both languages having most roots in common. I understood that she had started life in a harem at Constantinople, had been brought to Jidda by a Turkish official and then passed on from hand to hand, lower and lower till she had landed here in this garret, kept by a common but kind-hearted coolie.

I did for her what I could; the very presence of a woman seemed to comfort her, but her case was a bad one and I tried to convince her to let the doctor come and see her. She had become so attached to me that she allowed me to do what I thought best for her, and so I asked our chief doctor at Jidda, Djemal-Bey, to visit my patient. He confirmed the hopelessness of her case and advised to have her brought to the hospital, and we left together. When we had emerged from the dark staircase and narrow lane he turned sharply towards me and said: "Madam, you are seeking death!" "Why that, Doctor," I asked very much astonished. "How dare you go alone into such a house? Don't you know that the town is full of fanatics who may stab you, a Christian woman, at any moment, once they find you here unprotected?" I simply said what I believe in my heart and try to practice in my life: "I am in the hands of God and need not fear anybody." (This Djemal-Bey, when he had heard about my dispensary, was kind to me

and did not hinder my work, although he at once opened a dispensary of his own at "Ssahiya" so as to counterbalance my influence with the people.)

My poor patient allowed me at last to have her carried to the barrack hospital and I went out to visit her there. These barracks were outside the town; we had to go through the gate which leads to Medina; no European was allowed to go out unattended as directly outside the walls of Jidda the Bedouin rules supreme and is feared even by the Arabs of the town themselves. Outside this gate were only two other buildings—the famous tomb of Mother Eve and the barracks of the Turkish garrison—feared and hated by the people of Jidda. At the hospital I found my patient, who was the only woman there, attended by men only. The poor soul was near death; she was delighted to see me and held my hands in hers. Her once beautiful, now sunken eyes, looked into mine with a great yearning. My heart was deeply moved; I could not say much to her as it happens in moments of emotion, but I remember that I suddenly said two words only which expressed my feelings best. I simply said, "Allah—Muhabbat," "God is love." It seemed to have been just the message she had waited for. She threw her arms around my neck and cried out, "Ewwet, Ewwet," "Yes, yes!" We clung to each other in wordless but very real fellowship—realizing that to both of us in the presence of death there was this one great hope to look to—the love of God, and from my heart rose the prayer that, somehow, for the Beloved Son's sake, this benighted soul might be accepted by Him who is Love. She passed away the next day.

One of the first Meccan people with whom I came in contact was a Sheikh who owned a house at Jidda and stayed there during the weeks before the Feast—supervising the caravans of pilgrims, which gathered at Jidda and were sent under escort to Mecca—the route, although short, being not quite safe because of Bedouin robbers. This Sheikh had a lovely young wife—a Meccan lady—who was in expectancy, and as this happened to her for the first time she was worried and nervous; so the Sheikh asked me to come to his house and see what I could do for his little wife. Both treated me from the very first like a friend who could be trusted and took to me in such a hearty way that I felt with them quite at home. I could speak very little Arabic at that time, but the Sheikh and I managed to get along with a mixture of Turkish, Persian and Arabic, which served me quite well up to the time when I could understand Arabic and talk it well enough to make myself understood by my patients.

The young woman suffered from nausea and so I wrote a prescription for her which the Sheikh brought to the only local pharmacist, a Turk. The next day I called again and asked about the effect of my medicine. The Sheikh brought the bottle and told me that his wife had not taken the drug as it was not "fit for a Mohammedan lady." "Why not," I exclaimed, "What is wrong with it?" He opened the bottle and held it to my face—a strong smell of cognac struck me. "This is an error,

sir," I said, "I could never have given your wife cognac, she does not need any and I know that you, as a Mohammedan, would object to it, nor do I, a Christian, use or favor it. Come with me to the pharmacist." He followed me to the drug store. I spoke French with the owner and asked him to explain the presence of cognac when none was on my prescription. He sullenly acknowledged "an error" and set to make the medicine anew, this time under my control. The Sheikh stood by, not understanding one word of our conversation, his watchful eyes going from one to another, but he evidently trusted me, for he took the medicine home and his wife used it with good results. The charming little lady came to look on me as on a mother and asked me to accompany her to Mecca and to help her in her hour. When the Feast was drawing nigh, they both left for Mecca.

Next year—1914—when I returned to Jidda (end of August), I met the Sheikh in the Bazaar and was most cordially invited to come to his house and to see the lady and the "bousoura." I did so and was greeted like an old friend by the young mother who proudly showed me her brown little daughter. The baby was put into my arms and I was allowed to handle and to caress it and evidently not even the shadow of a fear of the "evil eye from the Nousrany" did come into the mother's heart! I had not yet started practicing, as this year, 1914, I had to ask for a permit from the Turkish Government which having expelled me last year after three and one-half months of work and knowing me to be a missionary of Jesus Christ, was loath to let me have it; but these good people being my personal friends I acceded to the lady's request for some necessary but simple medicine, and went with the Sheikh to the same pharmacist, who, by the way, had last year developed into a bitter foe of mine. All the same we exchanged a polite greeting and I gave him my prescription. He started to work at it and then said with a sly smile, "Some C O, of course?" "C O," said I, "what do you mean by that?" "Why cognac, of course." "Cognac, again," "What do you mean by this, sir? There is not the least need for any, nor would I give it to this lady who is as you know a Mohammedan and not supposed to take any spirits. Please keep strictly to my formula." He promised to do so and I left him with the Sheikh, who again had been silently but intently watching the scene. When I called on my friends the next day and asked about the effect of the medicine the Sheikh brought the bottle, its contents untouched, and said, "I have not given the medicine to my wife. I know you are our friend, but the pharmacist is your enemy and in order to hurt you amongst us Mohammedans here, is able to mix up a medicine which might injure your patient and bring you into trouble. But as to you, we trust you fully." I thanked him; I knew that what he said was likely to be true; all the more I prized the confidence and friendship of these good people.

I recall a family from Alexandria, Egypt, who had come to Jidda to trade there during the Hadj. I had to pass their small store every day on going and coming to and from my dispensary in the so-called

"Bokahara quarter." The father and two sons were my constant visitors and patients as they all suffered severely from the Jidda fever. When they left for Mecca some days before the Feast they came to say "good-bye" and to get their quinine and whatsoever they might need at Mecca, shaking hands in a most friendly way with the woman who wore on her white hospital apron the sign of Christ, the "Red Cross." When the Feast was over, the family returned to Jidda. I shall always remember the following scene: On passing their store and exchanging greetings with them, I noticed a new Meccan coat, an "A-ba," which the father had thrown over his shoulders. It was exquisite in cut and blending of colors and I expressed my admiration. In the most unexpected way I saw the man's eyes flame up and he exclaimed, "Repeat the Kalima, repeat the Kalima just only once, and I will take you to Mecca and get you the most beautiful A-ba that can be had there!" I felt the blood leave my face at these words. My eyes flamed up too. "Repeat the Kalima—I repeat the Kalima? never! I love my Lord, I am here for my Lord's sake. Praise the Lord, I am a Christian." His face grew dark and menacing, as he echoed with a sneer, "A Christian! She's a Christian! Praise the Lord indeed! Ha, ha!" We looked into each other's eye, none found what to say more, but the banners were unfurled. "Here Christ, here Mohammedan." I left him and went homeward, my whole being trembling. "I, deny my precious Lord, like Esau for a dish of red pottage!" The outrage of the man's proposal cut me like a dagger, yet there was joy in my heart to have confessed my Lord openly and to have gloried in His Name which, here, meant shame! But alas, the entrance to this man's heart, for which I had worked many weeks, seemed now closed forever. This grieved me much and I prayed earnestly that the Lord would make me meet the man once more and give me the grace to say the right word to him before parting; and so He did. A few days before I had to leave Jidda, I met him on the Bazaar. I do not know whose hand went out first—we instantly drew near to each other and clasped hands like friends. I told him that I was about to leave Jidda till next year, and asked him whether he would accept a parting gift from me—some tracts in Arabic—on my faith in the Lord Jesus. He accepted my offer in the most cordial way and even asked me to send some to his father at Alexandria, whose address he gave me, and then we parted. I had been, to all likelihood, the first and only Christian with whom he ever had had intercourse up to this time, and if he did not take away anything else, he knew now this: that a Christian is willing to be a friend to Mohammedans and to serve them—but above all glories in lifting up the "blood-stained banner" of the Son of God, her Lord.

From the very beginning of my work I had been called to the house of a rich Meccan family, who like many of them, owned a house at Jidda, and spent the summer months here, it being considered cooler than Mecca. The house was typical of a well-to-do

Arab's home, below a hall where, reclining on a couch, the "old man" of the family passed his idle days, keeping an eye on everybody who might go up to the women's quarters. He gave me gracious "Salaam" every time I passed by him, going up to the richly furnished living rooms of the ladies. At that time of the year all the families in Jidda took in guests who had come to the Feast—the ladies being, of course, accommodated in the harem and the men being allowed to camp on the stairs; and I remember sometimes being hardly able to wind my way upwards to the fifth or sixth story, where, for coolness sake, the family mostly lived—for all the bodies of weary pilgrims that crowded the stairs. The ladies in this family struck me particularly by their affectionate manner, their bright faces, beaming with intelligence. They reminded me of well educated lively French women. I was asked in quite often for one of their guests, a native from Mecca who was about to return to her home there. She was much worried about some defect in her face that marred her pure-blooded Arabic beauty, and she was especially gratified when, with some massage and a salve, I had put her face in better shape. She left for Mecca with a real friendly feeling for the Christian woman and when her camel-driver returned to Jidda, he transmitted to me her "Salaams" and an invitation from her and her lady friends to come over to Mecca.

My special friend in this family was a lady whom I will always remember as one of those souls whom one meets sometimes in life, and with whom even a slight acquaintance establishes a contact from heart to heart and the assurance of understanding—if free intercourse were possible—in the deep things of God and life. She knew of course, as everybody there who came in contact with me, did, that I was a "Nousstrany" who openly confessed the Lord Jesus. Not with elaborate words or argument—I could not speak Arabic well enough to talk much about my faith, but I could, and did, mention the Name that is above every name whenever I could possibly do so, with pride and love, and anybody who came to my dispensary could not but notice on the walls the Scripture texts, written out by me in big Arabic letters and often changed, that testified to the very essence of my faith.

During the last two months of my stay at Jidda I was so taken up by my ever-growing work at the dispensary and at the homes of the Arabic ladies, that I hardly saw this particular friend of mine. But, when I had to leave Jidda I went to her once more to say "good-bye." She was very sorry to see me go and urged me to return for the next Hadj. She accompanied me down to the last steps which custom allowed her to reach and lingered there with evident regret. I put my hands on her shoulders and told her how glad I was that we had become such good friends, although I was a Christian and she a Mohammedan; with one of her impulsive movements she drew me to her, kissed me and said, "That is so—but have we not the same Lord?"

I cannot enter here into more details—let me only say that after some successful work amongst some of the ladies, practically all homes were open to me. Here was at last a woman come to help the women,—those poor “shut-ins” which custom condemned rather to suffer torments and wither away, than to seek help from a man! I saw a wide, wonderful field of work amongst them, open before me,—now that the pilgrims had left and my time was free for work amongst women exclusively. But I was not alone to see this opportunity! the Meccan Government saw it, too, and insisted on my leaving Jidda. When the Dragoman of the Russian Consulate, himself a Mohammedan, pleaded with the policeman to let me stay, as I was helping so many of their women, this man answered, “That is just the reason why the lady must leave. We know that she is a missionary and our women are silly, and may go after her!” And so, in order not to spoil the whole enterprise by provoking an act of open violence against me, which might have closed Jidda to future work—I left—but I came back eight months later—to be sent out again,—September, 1914.

My friends may ask, “And was, indeed, everything smooth and friendly? Was there no shadow? No heart-pain?”

No shadows? Oh, the black shadow of sin in every conceivable form, sometimes veiled, often shamelessly indulged in; the shadow of death—continually hovering over me, behind the corner of every street, on the dark stairs which I groped up to my patients, in the cup of may-be poisoned coffee offered me by some false friends, in the lonely lane when I followed at dark the messenger who came to lead me I did not know to whom and to what fate! But another shadow, sweet and safe, eclipsed them all, the “shadow of His wings” in which I did trust.

And when every evening, before closing for the night the door of my big four-story house, inhabited only by my faithful little dog and me—and swarms of bats, rats and lizards!—I went out on the flat roof, where to my left stretched out the peacefully breathing ocean and to my right, behind the silent desert and dimly seen hills, lay Mecca, and around me the sleeping town into which I was sent by God, a witness and a watchman—I flung my whole soul out and above space and time to those eternal stars who stood there—witnesses of God’s promises and faithfulness and power—in an impassioned appeal to Him who has sworn and who will not go back on His word, that the time should come “when every knee should bow before the Son of His love and every tongue should confess Him Lord.”

And now—oh ye unknown friends who read these lines, may it not be that amongst you there is the one, whom the Lord has appointed, fitted and anointed for work in Jidda and Mecca? Have my few, unskillful words not impressed you with the fact, that at the least knock,—the door will be opened from within by many an eager hand and many a voice will welcome you; we are waiting for you, a Christian sister! “Why were you so long in coming?”

Just Friends

BY MRS. EDWIN E. CALVERLEY, M.D.

MISSIONARY work for Arab women is often much like play. Sometimes it means sitting and drinking tea, and eating biscuits with a lot of pretty women. "Why, that isn't work," you might object, "that is just being friends." That is exactly it. But a few years ago the Arab women would not let us be friends with them. Gradually, curiosity got the better of them, and they opened their doors just a crack to see what we were like. It was a great triumph when we began to be invited to tea parties. We went and ate and drank and smiled, and pretty soon the "little book" went with us. Now we have many friends. Let us introduce you to a few of them.

First comes Dhahaya, our happy Bedouin. She came to us first in the hospital, among the hundreds who seek medicine for their eyes. Her name was registered, her eyes treated, and we passed on to other patients. For the time being Dhahaya was forgotten. Imagine our surprise, when, a few mornings later, Dhahaya burst upon us, full of joy and gladness, raining blessings on our heads. "I see! I see!" she cried, "oh thank you! God bless you! God give you health! God bless your father and your mother! God make your life a long one!"

"Why?" we asked perplexed, "Haven't you always seen?"

"Oh, don't you remember?" she said, a little reproachfully. "I was blind when I came to you. Seven years I was blind and had to be led by the hand. I was a burden in the home and no one wanted me. But now! Oh thank you! God bless you!" And so on until we were almost overcome with her gratitude.

Recently, Dhahaya and her husband have ceased to rove the desert with other Bedouins, and have rented a little house near the Mission compound. "Praise the Lord!" she announced one day, "I am going to be your neighbor, and then I can come to see you every day."

Our friend has been true to her word. Sometimes she comes alone, except for the laughing baby boy in her arms. Sometimes she is accompanied by her pretty daughter, soon to be married. Occasionally, she brings her neighbors or friends, too timid to attend the Christian hospital alone. Such an optimist we have seldom known. Her beaming smile and her ringing voice are enough to drive dull care away.

Dhahaya's eyes seldom have to be treated of late, but she cannot stay away from her Christian friends. "Good morning," she greets us in her musical voice, as she comes to see us. "I don't want any medicine today, I just want to see you and hear the reading. My eyes? They are splendid! God bless you!"

The house of our Bedouin friend is as neat as a pin. When we call to see her she spreads a clean straw mat on the floor of her tidy little room. Then she gets out her tray of dishes and makes tea for her visitors. She is far from rich, but there is sure to be milk for the tea of her guests, although milk is very expensive.

Dhahaya enjoys the Gospel services. She listens intently and with reverence. What she thinks about the teaching, she has not yet told us. Some day we hope to hear her exclaim in a broader and a deeper sense, "Once I was blind, but now I see!"

It was when Zahara was an in-patient in the hospital that we made the great discovery: the discovery, I mean, of an Arabian spinster. She was Zahara's cousin who came to see her every day, a small friendly person, with an ever ready smile, in spite of red and painful eyes. "Badura," we will call her, for she would not be willing to publish her real name.

We were talking about children, I think, when we first learned about Badura's single state. Poor little Zahara, who was barely fifteen, had just buried her second puny baby. "And you, Badura," we asked, "how many children have you?"

Badura blushed and giggled. "I?" she said, "I've never been married."

"Why, Badura, you must be nearly twenty years old, and many girls are married as young as nine. Why have your parents never married you?"

"Twenty!" exclaimed our little spinster, "I'm over thirty!"

"No one wants to marry her on account of her eyes," explained her sister, with no intention of being unkind. "That however, is not a sufficient reason, for even blind girls are always married in Arabia." The real reason, we learned, is because of a family quarrel. The cousin, whose, by custom, she should be, will not marry her, nor will he allow anyone else to do so.

So it happened, that we have for one of our most loyal and affectionate friends an Arabian spinster!

Badura's eyes are no longer red and painful, but merry and full of mischief. "I have become a perfect monkey," she said to us one day in the dispensary. "Since you operated on my eyes our house has been full of relatives and acquaintances who have not called for years. They come to see if it is true that my eyes are well. Even my brother-in-law, who is usually silent and morose, has gone so far as to joke with me. 'My eyes,' he teases me, 'are like the eyes of a fawn.'"

There is scarcely a day when Badura fails to greet us in the hospital. She does not need to come so often, and her house is more than a mile away. But she enjoys coming, she says, and makes her eyes an excuse. She is always among the first to take her place beside the speaker, when it is time for dispensary prayers. Her bright face is an inspiration. That she listens attentively is certain, for one day after prayers, she was heard to say to someone who had not been at the reading, "That's the second time they have preached about that story," and then she proceeded to tell the parable in her own words. It was evident that she had enjoyed it very much.

Badura is a veritable Santa Claus. Her pockets are always bulging with presents for her new-found friends. Sometimes the treasures prove

to be rag dolls she has made for the missionary's children, or strings of bright beads, or glass bracelets to delight the youngsters' hearts. Sometimes she deposits on the dispensary table a few handfuls of peanuts and sweets, or some eggs or a pound or two of potatoes. Empty-handed she never comes, but she can pay no money for her treatments, for she has no money of her own. Haven't you already begun to love our little Arab spinster?

We have left to the last the oldest and the closest friend of all. It is a pity to change her name, but it is wise. Her friendship for the missionaries dates back five years. So ardent is her love and so great her hunger for companionship that lack of time and physical strength make it impossible to satisfy her to the full.

"Umm Mohammed," (Mother of Mohammed), one of our missionaries questioned her one day, "tell me how you first became friendly with the missionary ladies? How did you happen to get acquainted with them?"

Smiles covered Umm Mohammed's face. Evidently it was no trial to tell this tale, and so she proceeded, interrupted at intervals by shouts of laughter from her assembled children.

"You see," she began, "it was this way. I was walking on the street one day with some friends when we saw a queer figure ahead of us. It was a person clothed in white and wearing a hat. 'What is that?' we whispered together, 'a man or a woman?' It seemed like a woman, but we had never before seen a woman wear white on the street. Just then the person stopped, turned and spoke to us. 'Can you tell me where So and So lives?' she asked. It was a woman, we knew by her voice. So we told her what she wanted to know. Then she spoke again in a friendly tone. 'And you,' she asked, 'from whose house do you come?'

"We lied to her about that, and passed on."

"Aren't you ashamed of having lied, Umm Mohammed?" asked her auditor. "No," she answered, "you see we didn't dare tell her the truth because we didn't know why she wanted the information. That was the first time I ever saw the Happy Lady.

"About that time I was having a lot of trouble with my children's heads. Their scalps were very sore, and none of the Arab medicines did them any good. Someone suggested that the Anglais had started a hospital not far away where women and children were being treated, and that I might try their medicine for my girls. Several times I made up my mind to go to the hospital, but my courage always left me when it was time to start. Finally my husband said to me, 'Suppose we go to the hospital together, I will wait for you on the men's side of the building. If anything happens to you give me a signal and we will escape together.'

"So at last we took the children and went. There were a lot of Arab women sitting on the verandah outside the dispensary, awaiting their turns. One by one they went into the rooms for their treatments

and came out again. When it came my turn to enter what was my surprise to find, within, the lady whom I had met on the street. It had never occurred to me to connect her with the *Inglais'* hospital. All the fear left me when she talked to me, and it was then that I began to love her. She told me to have my children's heads shaved. They had long beautiful hair, but I went right home and followed her advice, much to the astonishment of my neighbors. After that I took my girls regularly to the hospital and they got well.

"It wasn't long before the Happy Lady said she would like to call on me. I was much pleased, and when she delayed, I feared she couldn't find the house and went to meet her. After that I visited her, and, little by little, our friendship grew. Later the rest of you ladies came, and now I love you all and cannot do without you."

Upon Umm Mohammed's home and family the missionaries' friendship has not failed to leave its influence. You would hardly recognize her neat and orderly house as the same in which she lived five years ago, and her children from being sickly, unattractive, and shy little wild things, have become normal, winsome youngsters, full of fun and play. As to her husband, he has had his sight restored by the missionary doctor, for soon after the beginning of this story he had become totally blind from cataract.

There is another friend of ours in another station to whom God Himself has spoken. She has confessed her faith in Christ, and today her life is in very grave danger. Verily, "a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

"Umm Mohammed, what can our friend do?" asked one of the missionary ladies. "Can you think of any way by which she can escape the cruelty of her family?"

"Let her stop going to your religious services," answered Umm Mohammed. "I used to attend your meetings, but I had to stop it. Let this other woman keep your friendship but stay away from your meetings."

"But Umm Mohammed, she cannot do that. God has spoken to her, and she cannot deny Him. She says that no matter if it costs her life she *cannot* stay away from the services. And listen to her letter: 'But I have joy in my Lord and strength in my heart though I am not able or allowed to show it.'"

"I know," said Umm Mohammed, "that you have the Truth. I witness that you Christians have purity of heart and that the Moslems are full of evil, hatred, envy, greed, and uncleanness. But, as for me, I must remain a Moslem. If I should become one of you, I should suffer just as this other woman does. All the world would come down upon my head. I cannot give up your friendship, but I dare not have anything to do with your religion. Consider, dear friend, I have a family of daughters to be married. Even now, the arrangements we have made for the marriage of our eldest daughter to my brother's son seem about to fall through. And why? Because I insist upon

my younger children going to the Mission girls' school every morning. My brother is angry because I do not keep them closely secluded in the house as he desires. I am holding out. My girls must have their chance. It will change their whole life. Even after the two months they have gone to school I can see a great improvement in their minds. And they are so happy, singing all day long the songs their teacher has taught them. I intend to hold out about the school question, but I cannot go any further. I can't, I can't."

And you, dear reader, if it were as hard for you to confess Jesus Christ as for this Arab woman—would you do it?

Missionary friendships may begin with a cup of tea or a bottle of medicine, but, you see, they do not always end there.

Will you add these women to your prayer list?

Schoolgirls Who Need Your Prayers

MRS. M. DEPREE THOMS.

OUR school year in Basrah is drawing to a close but that is not considered by the schoolgirls as a time for rejoicing. Nor would it be for the missionaries if it were not for the intense heat which makes being out in the middle of the day almost unbearable and perhaps not very safe. The girls often say that the school is better than their homes so the last day before a long vacation is for them a time of weeping and many lamentations.

Before I realized how much school means to many of them I asked how many would like a holiday on New Year's Day. Not a hand was raised, and thinking the question had been misunderstood I asked how many would rather come to school than to have a holiday, and every girl in the room raised her hand!

When teaching a class the names of the days of the week, I asked which day was the best. One girl promptly said, "Monday, for then we can come back to school after two days at home," and the others readily agreed.

This attitude of the girls toward their school makes teaching them a joy. Practically every girl is in school from choice; in fact, she often has difficulty in getting the permission of her parents to come. This makes a group of girls so eager to learn that it makes up for much of the lack of ability due to generations of illiteracy.

Besides the Moslem prejudice against educating girls another great stumbling block in the eyes of Moslem parents is the Bible study which is required of all pupils. The girls themselves seldom object to the Bible study and are usually so happy when considered advanced enough to have copies of the Gospel. They put just as much time on the preparation of their daily Bible lesson as they do on any of their other

lessons. That means a surprising amount of knowledge of the Bible among the older girls. It rather took my breath away, when taking a class of them in the study of the Life of Christ, to find how carefully they committed all of the references to memory. I wasn't accustomed to that even in Sunday School work among children of Christian parents at home.

One of the older girls, who is a pupil teacher, teaching Arabic reading in the Primary classes, objected rather strenuously to taking the Bible work. I was naturally very solicitous that she, for her own sake, but also because of her position in the school, should have the opportunity of taking this course in the Life of Christ. She soon told me that she always read her lesson to her mother and a friend living with them and that they read not only the Bible references but the entire chapters in which the references were found, as they were all so interested in the teachings and life of Christ. Her interest does not yet mean an interest in her own salvation through Christ for she is still satisfied in her mind that the Moslem religion is the true religion and her only hope of gaining entrance into Heaven and its rewards lies in Islam. It seems to me, however, that she is actuated more by a spirit of love for and desire to please God in her religious life, than are many of the Moslems about us. Are you deeply enough interested in her and in what she may mean to our school if she should learn to understand and accept the love of Christ poured out for her, to plead with God for the accomplishment of that in her life? We may be able to prepare the soil and plant the seed but the rain and sunshine must come from above. Is that being withheld because we are not showing a united front in fighting the enemy who so boldly challenges the position given by God to our Christ?

Missionary Personalia

Miss Gertrud Schafheitlin and Rev. G. J. Pennings were married on June 17th at Bahrein. There being no clergyman at that Station, the marriage ceremony was postponed until the arrival of Rev. and Mrs. Calverley on their way for a summer's vacation in India. The steamer was in port only a few hours and the marriage ceremony took place in the Bahrein Chapel at nine o'clock in the forenoon. Mr. and Mrs. Pennings will continue to live in Bahrein occupying the house recently vacated by Rev. and Mrs. Dykstra who are at home on furlough.

A letter has been received from Dr. S. M. Zwemer, dated at Alexandria, August 3rd, announcing his safe arrival at his journey's end. On his way back to the field Dr. Zwemer stopped in Switzerland where he met various Missionary leaders and particularly had the pleasure of meeting Dr. René Warney who has translated his book, "Islam" into French for the Continental Student Movement. Dr. Zwemer also visited Jerusalem where a bookshop has recently been opened under the auspices of the Nile Mission Press. He may now be addressed at 14 Sharia Abul-Seba'a, Cairo, Egypt.

Rev. and Mrs. Dirk Dykstra may now be addressed R. F. D. Holland, Michigan. Mr. Dykstra has been speaking at various Mission Fests in the West during the summer months.

Miss Charlotte B. Kellien arrived in New York City on July 7, 1920. Her return to America at this time was caused by the serious illness of her mother, and all her friends will sympathize with her in the death of her mother, which occurred on August 9th. Miss Kellien is at home with her sister at 314 Fulton Avenue, Detroit, Michigan.

The Annual Meeting of the Arabian Mission was held this year in India at Kodaikanal, where a considerable number of the Missionaries were spending the summer. This arrangement made it possible for the Deputation of the Board, Dr. T. H. Mackenzie and Dr. W. I. Chamberlain, to attend the Meeting before proceeding to the Persian Gulf and a personal visit to the various Stations.

The Misses Jackson, who for over a year have been serving as honorary missionaries in the Girls' School at Basrah, have now returned home and may be addressed at 305 Dudley Ave., Westfield, New Jersey. The service which they have rendered is deeply appreciated by the Mission. Though their stay was a comparatively short one, they have won the love and esteem of the girls of the School as well as the staff.

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